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## ATTACHING FIXTURE WHIPS TO CEILING GRID SUPPORT WIRES

Section 300.11 (A) (2) of the 2002 NEC states that — “Wiring located in the cavity of a non-fire-rated floor-ceiling or roof-ceiling assembly shall not be secured to, or supported by, the ceiling assembly, including the ceiling support wires. An independent means of secure support shall be provided.

**Exception: The ceiling support system shall be permitted to support branch-circuit wiring and associated equipment where installed in accordance with the ceiling manufacturer’s instructions.”**

At the June 8, 2004 Board of Electrical Appeals meeting, the Board discussed this section of the NEC in depth. The Board agreed that in a number of cases a structural ceiling is located many feet above the ceiling grid, and it can be very difficult to attach separate support wires for the fixture wiring, especially on remodels or occupancy changes in existing structures. Therefore after continued discussion, the Board agreed to permit MC cable or flexible metal conduit in non-fire rated roof-ceiling assemblies only, to be attached to the ceiling grid support wires serving lighting fixtures located within the ceiling grid area, in lieu of requiring separate support wires being installed from the structural ceiling. However, the following conditions must be adhered to.

1. The MC cable or flexible metal conduit must not be larger than ½ inch trade size.
2. Only a single MC cable or flexible metal conduit may be attached per ceiling grid support wire.
3. Only clips or devices approved for the purpose may be used to attach the MC cable or flex to the support wires.
4. No junction boxes or conduit may be attached.

This new policy became effective September 1, 2004, and will be included in the City of Wichita Electrical Code (Title 19) in the near future.

*Wayne L. Bolen, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Electrical / Elevator*

## Mechanical Certificate

The Board of appeals of Refrigeration, Air-conditioning, Warm air heating and Boilers voted to allow testing for Mechanical Trade under the International Code Council. This has been passed through city council and is now accepted in Wichita.

To sign up for this exam go to [www.iccsafe.org/certification](http://www.iccsafe.org/certification) and register. Once you have taken the exam and passed with a 75% or greater, bring your score and documentation showing you have met the minimum experience requirements and Wichita will allow you to have a certificate with the required fees.

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## Plumbing / Drainlayers Partial Sewer Replacements

The Board of Appeals of Plumbers and Gas Fitters along with Sewer Maintenance and the Office of Central Inspection passed the requirement that when doing a repair or partial replacement on an existing sewer line and you are **NOT** replacing the line from the structure to the main, *you will be required to T.V. the existing line* to show OCI that the line not being replaced is in good (satisfactory) condition.

*Dan Leidy, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Mechanical / Plumbing*

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## Permit Fee Increase

The Office of Central Inspection will be adding a 15% surcharge on building permit fees effective with the start of business 2005. This will be added on both Residential and Commercial building permit fees.

*Gary Cortner, Administrative Services Supervisor*

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## Building Inspectors Field Hours Change

The Office of Central Inspection is committed to improving customer service and operating in an efficient manner. The construction industry seems to prefer requesting the majority of the building inspections between the hours of 9:00 am and 12:00 pm. In order to accomplish this task and in an effort to cut back overtime, the building inspection section field inspectors will begin observing 30 minute lunch periods, rather than the 60 minute lunch period that is now observed. The 30 min. lunch period will be taken between the hours of 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. This change will allow additional 4 1/2 inspection hours per day for AM inspections.

The building inspector will be available in the office from 7:30 am to 8:30 am and after their last afternoon inspection until 4:00 pm.

*Ray Sledge, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Building*

## ON-LINE PERMITTING AND INSPECTION SCHEDULING

The Office of Central Inspection is performing final testing for implementation of an Internet permitting and inspection scheduling system. Several contractors are currently testing the system to provide input on final desired enhancements. Initially, permit types that will be processed over the Internet include: roofing/siding, 1 & 2 family remodeling (not including additions), electrical, mechanical and plumbing. Internet inspection scheduling should be available for all permit types upon initial rollout. As soon as standards and mechanisms for submitting electronic site plans over the Internet are finalized, permits for 1 & 2 family new construction and additions will also be able to be processed over the Internet. The new system is called "E-Permits". This online permitting system will be a secured system made available to licensed Wichita contractors only.

If you have not looked at the public version of "E-Permits", you may wish to view it on the City's website, [www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov). On the home page of the City's website, you can click on "E-Permits" and then on "Public Access" for online permits. From here, you can obtain/print information on permits by entering a permit number, an address, your business name, your business name in combination with a range of permit numbers or a permit type, etc. Access to complete inspection histories for permits may be quite beneficial to you.

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## CELL PHONES FOR CONSTRUCTION INSPECTORS

With the support of building industry representatives, OCI has received year 2005 funding approval to purchase cell phones for building and trade construction inspectors. This should make it easier for inspectors to communicate with contractors, and visa versa. The cell phones should also allow inspectors to spend additional time in the field instead of at their desks to answer and return phone calls from contractors. We hope to complete purchase of phones and implement the technology by April 2005.

*Kurt Schroeder*

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Effective January 1, 2005 Office of Central Inspection Electrical and Elevator section re-inspection fees will increase from fifteen dollars to thirty dollars. This increase is necessary to stay abreast of administrative costs associated with re-inspections.

*Wayne L. Bolen, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Electrical / Elevator*

## Technology Enhancements Update

## Re-Inspection Fees Increase

# **2003 IBC CODE ADOPTION UPDATE**

Central Inspection has decided not to pursue the adoption of the 2003 International Building Code, but instead will wait for the release of the 2006 version. This is due primarily to the delay in adoption of the 2000 IBC that was not officially implemented in Wichita until April 2002. As you are probably aware, the 2000 IBC replaced the UBC that had been used in Wichita for about 35 years (the UBC is no longer published). Understandably, it has taken some time for designers and builders to get comfortable with the new code and code format. However, staff has reviewed the 2003 to determine if proposed changes found in the 2003 document should be incorporated into the currently adopted 2000 IBC, based primarily on questions or concerns that have been raised by designers, contractors, staff or others since the 2000 IBC adoption. Some of the proposed amendment changes for the 2000 IBC are as follows:

**1).** Add language to Section 303.1 on assembly occupancies to clarify that adult care facilities (adult day care) where occupants are capable of responding to emergency situations without physical assistance from staff is a Group A-3 Occupancy.

Add an exception to Section 303.1 that classifies assembly uses having an occupant load of 50 or less as a Group B Occupancy.

**2).** Modify Section 308.2 (Group I-1) and 310. (Residential Group R) to allow facilities of 10 or fewer persons to be considered as Group R-3 Occupancies. This change would be consistent with prior practice under the Uniform Building Code.

**3).** Drop current language found in Section 406.6.2 the 2000 IBC (current amendment) for proposed language in the 2003. The language in the 2000 IBC is fairly restrictive in regards to fire barrier requirements for mixed-use repair garages, and not allowing the use of the non-separated use provisions found in Section 302. The 2003 language treats repair garages like other occupancies, in that, the fire barrier and a non-separated use provisions is driven by area, occupancy and construction type considerations.

**4).** Bring over the language for smoke partitions found in the 2003 and incorporate it into the corridor provisions found in Section 407.3. This is done to clarify the intent of corridor protection for hospitals and other Group I-2 Occupancies.

**5).** Incorporate a new provision that allows one story Group A-3 Occupancies that are fully sprinklered and have 60 foot yards to be constructed as unlimited area buildings.

**6).** Add language to allow multiple electrical services to buildings where each area is separated with two-hour fire barriers in lieu of a fire wall. This would be limited to situations where a fire wall is not required for building area considerations.

*cont. on page 5*

**2003 IBC  
CODE  
ADOPTION  
UPDATE**

- 7). Clarify the requirements on continuity of fire barriers at architectural features having concealed spaces on the building exterior. The current language would require that the fire barrier extend through the concealed element and that all supporting structural members be protected. The new language would limit the protection to just the concealed element.
- 8). Clarify shaft requirements to indicate that the number of stories include basements, but not mezzanines.
- 9). Allow listed putty pads as an exception to membrane penetration protection.
- 10). Replace current language found in Section 713.5 (exterior structural members) with proposed language from the 2003 for clarification purposes.
- 11). Add an exception to Section 715.6.1 (through penetrations) to allow a duct to penetrate three floors or less without a fire damper at each floor, subject to five conditions set out in the exception.
- 12). Add language to eliminate ceiling radiation dampers where exhaust duct penetrations are protected in accordance with Section 712.4.2 and are located within the wall cavity of the unit and do not pass through another dwelling unit or tenant space.
- 13). Modify language for enclosed parking garages to trigger sprinkler protection at 12,000 square feet, similar to repair garages. The current requirement requires sprinklers for all S-2 parking garages without exception. In addition, change commercial parking garages from 5,000 to 12,000 square feet as the trigger point for sprinkler protection.
- 14). Modify the fire alarm and system initiation requirements for Group A Occupancies to clarify that the system is based on an individual room capacity for both, not the aggregate occupant load of the fire area.
- 15). Add language to regulate side reach ranges for wheelchair users to mirror that of forward reach ranges: not less than 15 inches nor more than 48 inches.
- 16). Clarify that manually operated water closet flush controls must be located on the wide side of the toilet area.
- 17). Require that raised counters or bars where alcoholic beverages are served be provided with a lowered section to accommodate the disabled, except when the seating capacity is 10 or fewer and equivalent service is provided.

*Paul Hays*